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Yuma Resource Area

April 1995

Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan, Environmental Assessment, and Decision Record

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BLM/AZ/PL-95/010

United States Department of the Interior

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YUMA DISTRICT OFFICE
YUMA RESOURCE AREA
3150 WINSOR AVENUE
YUMA, ARIZONA 85365

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IN REPLY REFER TO:
8560 (055)

April 27, 1995

Dear Reader:

The document accompanying this letter contains the Final Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan, Environmental Assessment and Decision Record. The Environmental Assessment analyzes the impacts expected from implementing the proposed Plan. The Plan will enable the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to improve its management of the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness.

The Draft Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan was released for public review and comment in September 1994. Comments on the draft plan were analyzed and included into the writing of the final plan document. A summary of the comments can be found in appendix A.

The Management Plan and Decision Record are subject to appeal in accordance with procedures contained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4. Implementation of this plan will not begin until 30 days after the date of this letter.

We in the Yuma District thank all who participated in this planning process and contributed to the development of this document. Your help and cooperation have been valuable in resolving natural resource management issues in the Yuma District.

Sincerely,

Joy Gilbert
Area Manager

1 Enclosure
1 - Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan

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Wilderness Management Plan

for the

Eagletail Mountains Wilderness

U.S. Department of the Interior

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Area Manager, Yuma Resource Area — Date

Recommended by: _____ 2/17/95
District Manager, Yuma District — Date

Approved by: _____ 2/22/95
State Director, Arizona — Date

Wilderness Management Plan

for the

Eagletail Mountains Wilderness

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Part I - Introduction

Background and Purpose

The National Wilderness Preservation System was established by the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Arizona Desert Wilderness Act (Public Law 101-628) designated the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness on November 28, 1990. The wilderness is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Yuma District.

This plan provides management direction for the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness for the next 10 years. Wilderness management is guided by the Wilderness Act of 1964, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, 43 CFR 8560, and BLM Manual 8560. The plan conforms with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and the Lower Gila South Resource Management Plan (RMP).

The plan is a working document for on-the-ground management. Since this document cannot anticipate all future issues, it is intended to be reviewed annually and updated as deemed necessary to protect wilderness resources. Additional resource data and user information will be incorporated into the document as it becomes available to the BLM.

The plan amends and supersedes the Yuma Resource Area Interim Wildlife Operation and Maintenance Plan (1993), the Lower Gila South Habitat Management Plan (1990) (HMP), and the Yuma District Interim Guidance for Fire Suppression in Wilderness Areas (1992) where these plans relate to the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness. Adjacent planning efforts shall consider the provisions of this plan.

Authority to implement the plan is delegated to the Yuma District Manager except where delegation authority is specifically stated otherwise.

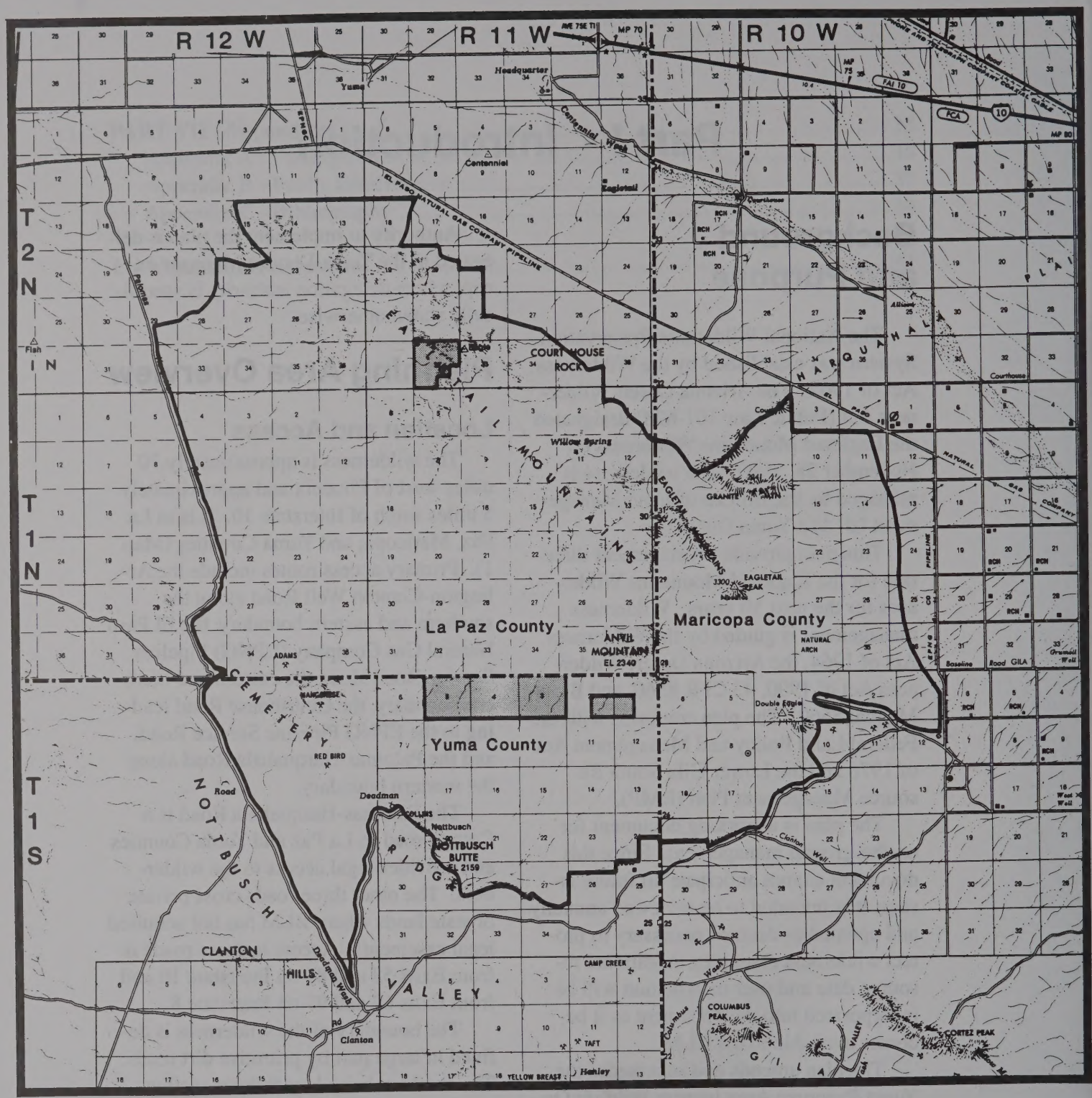
Planning Area Overview

Location and Access

The wilderness is approximately 70 miles west of Phoenix and approximately 5 miles south of Interstate 10. It is in La Paz, Maricopa, and Yuma Counties (Map 1). Primary access routes include the Arlington-Clanton Well Road along the southern and eastern boundary, the El Paso Natural Gas Company (EPNG) Pipeline Service Road along the eastern and northern boundary, the Courthouse Road leading to the EPNG Pipeline Service Road, and the Palomas-Harquahala Road along the western boundary.

The Palomas-Harquahala Road is a County road in La Paz and Yuma Counties and provides legal access to the wilderness. The other three roads cross private or state lands where BLM has not acquired legal easements. Access to these roads is from Exits 53 and 81 on Interstate 10 and from Exits 67 and 97 on Interstate 8.

The boundary of the wilderness is defined in large part by primitive dirt roads. The northern boundary follows section lines, topographic features, and 30-foot offsets from roads. The eastern line follows a canal right-of-way, 30-foot offsets from roads, and section lines. The southern boundary consists of section lines, topographic features, and dirt roads. The western boundary is a 30-foot offset parallel to a dirt road.



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Yuma District

EAGLETAIL MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS AREA

WILDERNESS AREA BOUNDARY

NONFEDERAL LAND WITHIN WILDERNESS AREA

N

SCALE
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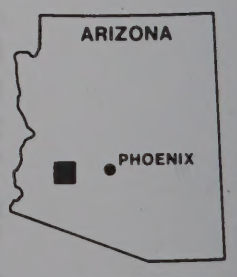
Miles



LOCATION MAP
Map 1
1990

Basemap © ADOT

Ownership

The planning area includes the entire Eagletail Mountains Wilderness (97,880 acres of BLM land, 2,720 acres of State land). Additionally, there are approximately 1,400 acres of State subsurface. There are no privately-owned inholdings (Map 2). BLM administers most lands directly adjacent to the wilderness. There are some sections of State land adjacent to the northern, eastern and southern boundaries. There is also some private land on the east, and a Bureau of Reclamation canal right-of-way that marks part of the eastern boundary.

Wilderness Values

The wilderness is generally natural in appearance and offers outstanding opportunities for solitude, but contains some areas affected by various uses that occurred before wilderness designation. These surface impacts include, but are not limited to, those caused by mining operations, recreational uses, and grazing and wildlife habitat developments. These impacts detract from the natural character of the wilderness. Mining operations have left a number of bulldozer scrapes, mine shafts and adits, as well as bulldozed pathways and trails. Recreation use in the area has left behind vehicle tracks, fire rings, and campsite impacts. There is a range development known as 6 Mile Well, project #32039. The permit authorizing this project has been cancelled. This project is located in sec. 18, T. 1 S., R. 11 W., and consists of a hand dug well approximately 4-foot square by 50-foot deep with no attendant pumping facilities, covered by a piece of plywood, a 1,300-gallon capacity square concrete trough and a small net wire holding pen. There are additional impacts caused by existing grazing developments. Wildlife habitat projects are still in use and have visual and physical impacts on the wilderness. An approximate 100,000-square-foot dump site containing surface trash is about 50 feet within the eastern boundary along the canal right-of-way.

The topographic diversity, scenic character, botanical, wildlife, and cultural values of the wilderness create superior opportunities for primitive recreation. The geologic, botanical, and cultural resources combine to offer an opportunity for scientific and educational study in a pristine setting.

Topography

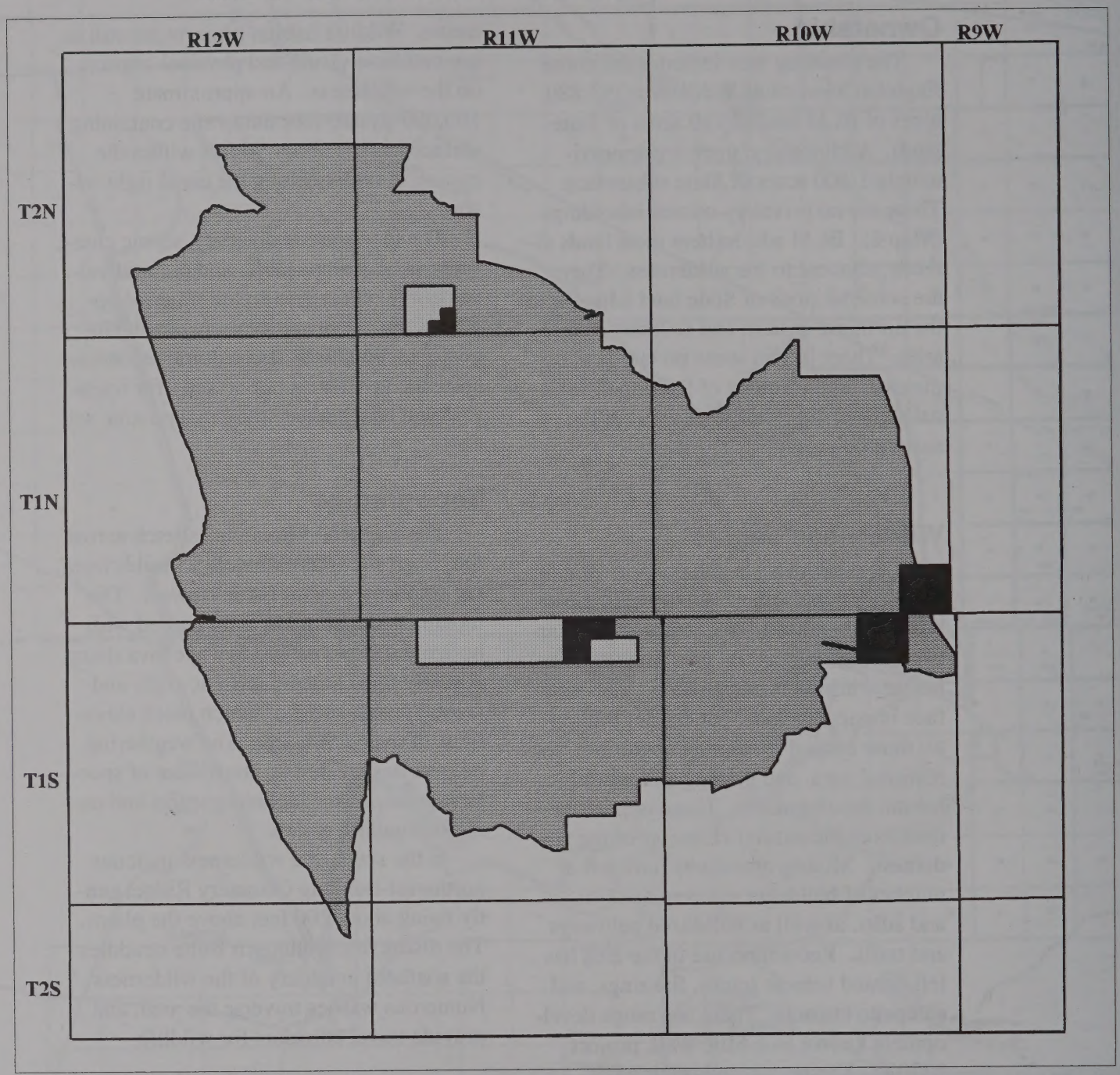
The Eagletail Mountains stretch across the desert for approximately 15 miles from the southeast toward the northwest. The mountain slopes are heavily eroded with horizontal flows of Tertiary age lava rising abruptly to weathered basaltic cliffs and jagged peaks, some of which reach elevations of over 2,900 feet. The weathering process has created an abundance of spectacular landforms including spires and numerous natural arches.

In the south, the wilderness includes northwest-trending Cemetery Ridge, gently rising about 200 feet above the plains. The distinctive Nottbusch Butte straddles the southern boundary of the wilderness. Numerous washes traverse the area, and provide travel corridors for wildlife.

Climate/Air/Water

The wilderness is located within the Sonoran Desert physiographic province. Temperature extremes range from near freezing during the winter to as much as 120 degrees Fahrenheit during the summer. Annual precipitation averages less than 8 inches and generally occurs during winter and summer periods.

MAP 2 - SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE OWNERSHIP



EAGLETAIL MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS

LEGEND

- BLM Surface and Subsurface
- State Surface and Subsurface
- BLM Surface and State Subsurface
- Wilderness Boundary

N

0 3 6 MILES

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YUMA RESOURCE AREA
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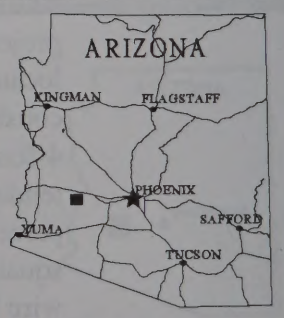


LOCATION DIAGRAM

The planning area is classified under the Clean Air Act as Class II. No site-specific air quality data exists for the Eagletail Mountains. Some activities occurring outside the wilderness may affect air quality in the planning area.

There are no identified springs or other permanent natural water sources within the wilderness. There is no dependable surface water available for recreational use. Surface water may accumulate in potholes and drainages after rainstorms.

Soils

Three main soil types in the wilderness are the Antho-Carrizo complex, the Cherioni-Rock outcrop complex, and Rock outcrop-Cherioni complex. These soils represent a broad spectrum of soil surface textures, predominantly very gravelly loams and gravelly loams. Other textures include loamy sand, silt loam, loam, clay, and silty clay loam. Depth of soils to bedrock is largely determined by the position on the landscape. Soils situated in the bottoms, alluvial fans and terraces are generally deep with moderate to high infiltration rates. Soils in the hills and mountains are generally shallow to very shallow with low to moderate infiltration rates. Some of the soils are calcareous throughout the profile and others may have a restrictive layer of high lime in the profile. A majority of the soils have gravels and/or cobbles throughout the profile with a preponderance of surface gravels and rock outcrops.

Vegetation

The wilderness consists of two basic plant communities, these are the Lower Colorado River and the Arizona Uplands. Both communities are subdivisions of the Sonoran Desert.

The Lower Colorado River community consists primarily of creosote-bursage (*Larrea tridentata*) and (*Ambrosia dumosa*). Other vegetation such as ironwood (*Olneya tesota*), ratany (*Krameria* spp), Mormon tea (*Ephedria funeria*), and big galleta grass (*Hilaria rigida*) are common components. This community produces a wide variety of annual vegetation including Indian Wheat (*Plantago insularis*) and sixweeks grama (*Bouteloua barbatus*). This community dominates the broad valley floors and lower bajadas. Informal surveys indicate that this community is in fair to low-good condition (mid to late seral stage).

The Arizona Uplands community consists of paloverde-cactus (*Cercidium* spp) mixed shrubs and is dominated by littleleaf paloverde trees and large saguaro cactus (*Carnegia gigantea*). Other plant species include acacia (*Acacia greggii*), bush muhley (*Muhlenbergia porteri*) and mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*). Annuals include Turkshead spineflower (*Chorizanthe rigida*). The Arizona Uplands occurs on the uppermost bajadas and into the mountains. Informal surveys recently conducted by the BLM indicate that this community is in good to excellent condition (late seral to Potential Natural Community (PNC)).

The wilderness also harbors isolated stands of oak (*Quercus turbinella* var. *turbinella*) and juniper (*Juniperus*). These are unusual species for this portion of the Sonoran Desert. The area also contains non-native species such as Mediterranean grass (*Schismus barbata*) and red brome (*Bromus rubens*).

None of these vegetative communities developed under the influence of fire. A majority of these species will not survive a fire. After fire, native vegetation could reestablish slowly. Any occurrence of fire would lead to an increase in non-native annual species.

There are currently no existing vegetation or range monitoring sites located in the area.

Wildlife

Wildlife typical of the Sonoran Desert inhabit the area. Common species include mammals such as coyote (*Canis latrans*), mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), and kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*). Birds such as Gambels quail (*Lophortyx gamblii*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), and white-winged dove (*Zenaida asiatica*) make their homes in the wilderness. There is suitable habitat for numerous reptiles, such as Gila monsters (*Heloderma suspectum*), and various types of snakes and small reptiles.

The desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis mexicana*) is a resident species that merits special management attention. Approximately 70,000 acres of the wilderness are designated crucial habitat for this animal. The existing herd numbers approximately 60 to 80 animals and is in good condition. Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) monitors big game herd populations with annual aerial surveys and is responsible for the following seven wildlife developments (Map 3):

1. AGFD No. 605—(sec. 8, T. 1 S., R. 10 W.) Approximately 1.2 miles from wilderness boundary along closed vehicle trail. This is a rain apron and steel storage tank catchment system. This development is in good condition. It has required water supplementation in the past.

2. AGFD No. 712—(sec. 32, T. 1 N., R. 11 W.) Approximately 3.8 miles from the wilderness boundary, along a closed vehicle trail. This is a rain apron and steel storage tank catchment system. This development is in poor condition and requires extensive repairs. The apron structure has partially collapsed, one of the steel storage tanks leaks and will require replacement. This development has required water supplementation in the past.

3. AGFD No. 726—(sec. 4, T. 1 N., R. 11 W.) Approximately 2.5 miles from wilderness boundary. This water development is a rain apron and steel storage tank system. It uses slick rock as an apron to capture water. Currently this system is in good condition. This development has required water supplementation in the past.

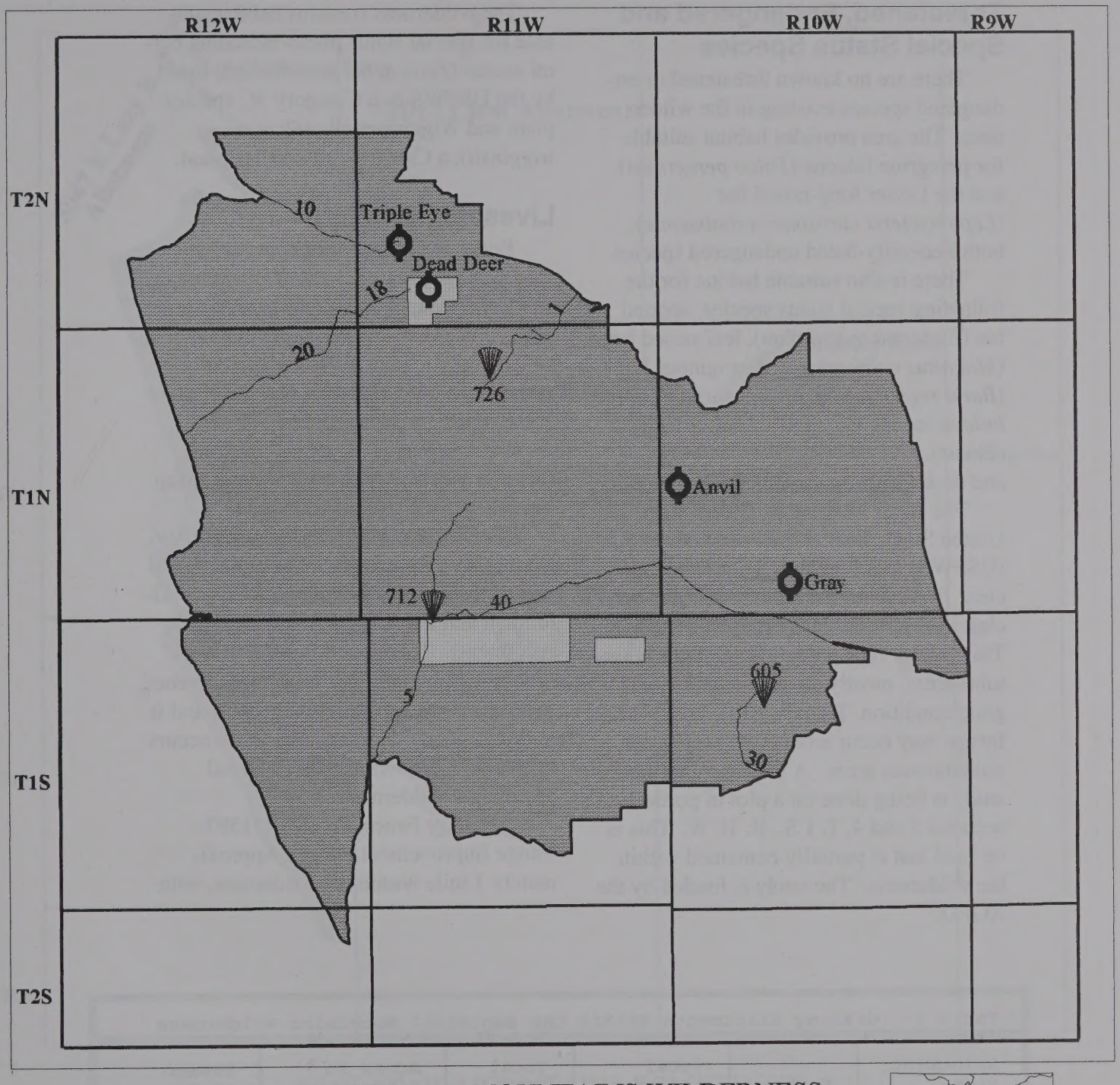
4. Anvil Tank (AGFD No. 834)—(sec. 19, T. 1 N., R. 10 W.) Approximately 6 miles from wilderness boundary. This is a pothole development consisting of a pothole, masonry dam, gabion structures, and piperail fence. This structure is currently in good condition. It has required water supplementation in the past.

5. Dead Deer Tank—(sec. 32, T. 1 N., R. 11 W.) Approximately 5 miles on a closed vehicle trail from wilderness boundary. This is a pothole development consisting of a pothole and gabion structure. It is on State land but must be accessed by crossing lands administered as wilderness by the BLM. This development is currently in good condition.

6. Gray Tank—(sec. 33, T. 1 N., R. 10 W.) Approximately 1.5 miles from wilderness boundary. This is a pothole development consisting of a masonry dam below a pothole. This development is in good condition.

7. Triple Eye Tank (AGFD No. 827)—(sec. 30, T. 2 N., R. 11 W.) Approximately 3.2 miles on a closed vehicle trail from the wilderness boundary. This is a pothole development consisting of two masonry dams, shade structures, gabions and piperail fencing. The development is in poor condition and will require extensive repairs. This development has required water supplementation in the past.

MAP 3 - WILDLIFE WATER DEVELOPMENTS AND ACCESS ROUTES



EAGLETAIL MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS

LEGEND
- Wilderness Area
- State Lands
- Wilderness Boundary
- 5 Trails
- Pothole Catchment
- 605 Wildlife Catchment

N

0 3 6 MILES

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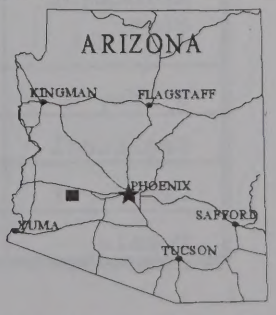
YUMA DISTRICT OFFICE
YUMA RESOURCE AREA
AUGUST 1994



LOCATION DIAGRAM

Threatened, Endangered and Special Status Species

There are no known threatened or endangered species existing in the wilderness. The area provides habitat suitable for peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) and the Lesser long-nosed bat (*Leptonycteris curosoae verbabuenae*), both Federally-listed endangered species.

There is also suitable habitat for the following special status species: spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum*), leaf-nosed bat (*Macrotus californicus*), ferruginous hawk (*Butio regalis*), Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Chuckwalla (*Sauromalus obesus*), rosy boa (*Lichanura triuirgata*) and desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*).

The desert tortoise is listed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as a Category 2 candidate species. Portions of the wilderness have been classified as a Category II tortoise habitat. This habitat type contains high density tortoise areas, mostly on public land that is in good condition. Tortoise-cattle conflict for forage may occur around the base of the mountainous areas. A long-term tortoise study is being done on a plot in portions of sections 3 and 4, T. 1 S., R. 10 W. This is on land that is partially contained within the wilderness. The study is funded by the AGFD.

The wilderness contains habitat suitable for special status plants including barrel cactus (*Ferocactus acanthodes*), listed by the USFWS as a Category 3C species plant and Wiggins cholla (*Opuntia wigginsii*), a Category 3B species plant.

Livestock Grazing

Portions of three allotments are included in the area: K Lazy B, Eagletail, and Clem (Map 4 and Table 1). All three allotments are classified as perennial/ ephemeral allotments and are currently grazed in accordance with permits in place at the time of wilderness designation.

The following five range developments are located in the wilderness: (Map 4)

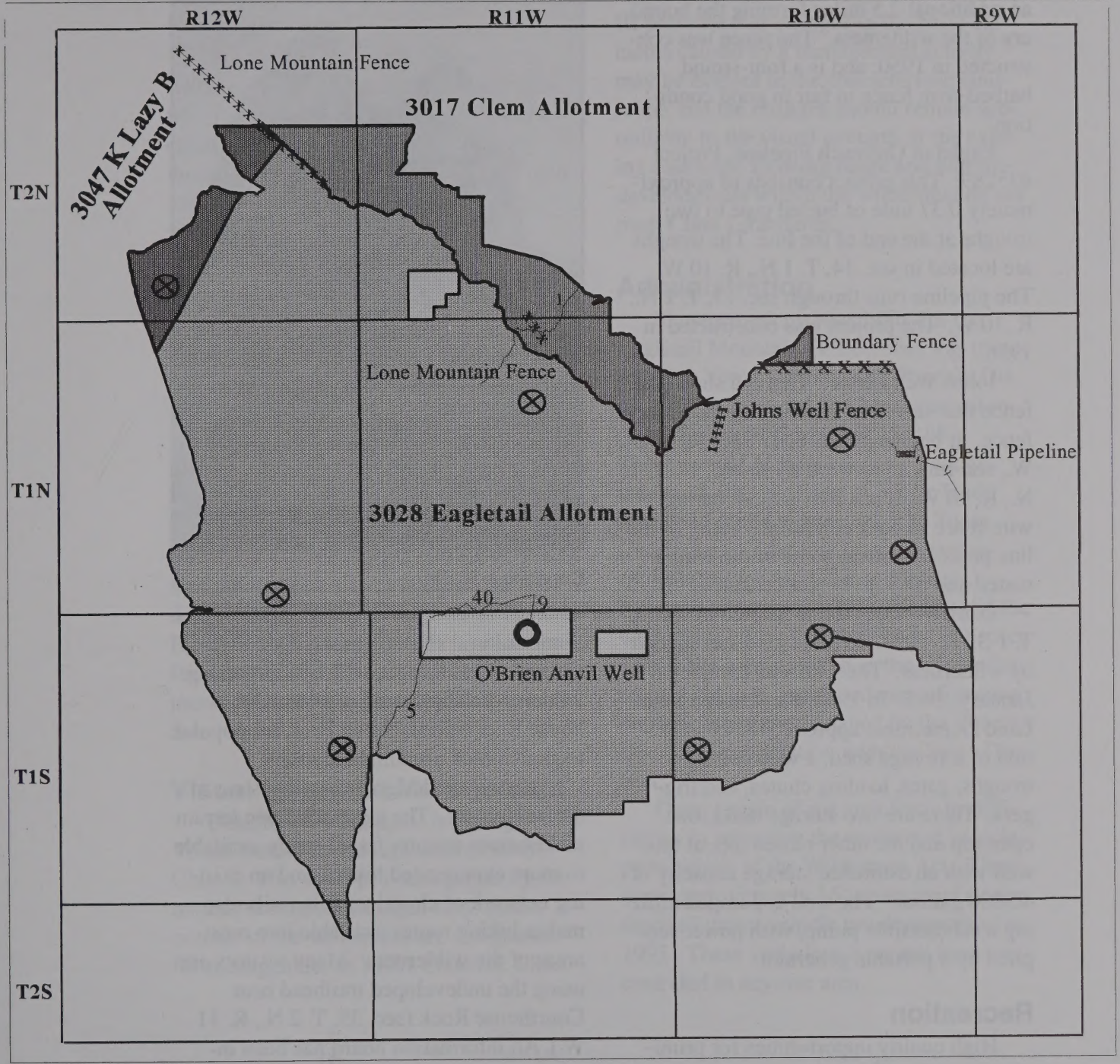
Lone Mountain Fence, Project #30596. Cooperative Agreement. This fence forms part of the boundary between the Clem Allotment and the K Lazy B and Eagletail Allotments. Total length within wilderness is 2.15 miles. This four-strand barbed wire fence was constructed in 1941, and is in fair to good condition. The fence occurs in two segments within the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness.

Boundary Fence, Project #31597. Range Improvement Permit. Approximately 1 mile within the wilderness, with

Table 1: Grazing Allotments Within the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness

Allotment Name	Number	Total Allotment Acres	Total AUMS	Acres in Wilderness	Season of Use
K Lazy B	3047	128,466	1,861	1,970	yearlong
Eagletail	3028	179,460	2,100	92,020	yearlong
Clem	3017	82,252	3,216	6,610	yearlong
Totals		390,178	7,177	100,600	

MAP 4 - RANGE DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS



LEGEND

- State Lands
- Wilderness Boundary
- Fence
- Pipeline
- 5 Access Trails
- Well
- Livestock Trough
- Key Areas

EAGLETAIL MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS

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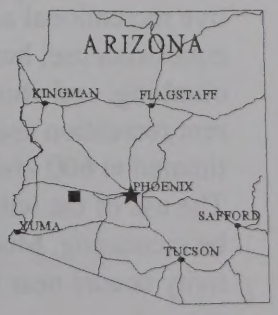
AUGUST 1994



LOCATION DIAGRAM

an additional 2.5 miles forming the boundary of the wilderness. The fence was constructed in 1950, and is a four-strand barbed wire fence in fair to good condition.

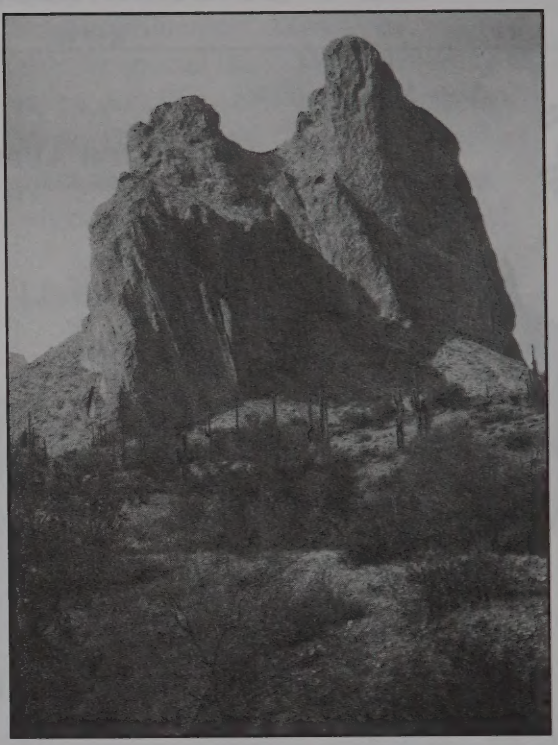
Eagletail Outreach Pipeline, Project #35289: This project consists of approximately 0.37 mile of buried pipe to two troughs at the end of the line. The troughs are located in sec. 14, T. 1 N., R. 10 W. The pipeline runs through sec. 13, T. 1 N., R. 10 W. The project was constructed in 1986.

Johns Well Fence: This is a short gap fence that serves as an allotment boundary fence. It begins in sec. 8, T. 1 N., R. 10 W., and runs southwesterly to sec. 17, T. 1 N., R. 10 W. It is a four-strand, barbed wire fence in poor condition. Many of the line posts are rotten, some of the wire is rusted and may no longer be usable.

O'brien Anvil Well is located in sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 11 W. on State land surrounded by wilderness. The well was completed in January 1985. In 1988, the Arizona State Land Department approved the construction of a storage shed, a wire corral, troughs, gates, loading chutes, and triggers. There are two storage tanks, one open top and the other closed top, at this well with an estimated storage capacity of 40,000 gallons. The well is pumped utilizing a submersible pump, with power supplied by a portable generator.

Recreation

High quality opportunities for primitive recreational activities such as hiking, equestrian use, hunting, backpacking, rock climbing, and photography abound. Current recreation use in the wilderness is estimated at 600 visitor use days per year. The use of the wilderness does appear to be increasing. Much of the recreational activity occurs near the Eagletail Mountains.



Courthouse Rock

Some cultural sites are receiving a high amount of visitor use, which is impacting wilderness values at these sites. Courthouse Rock and Eagletail Peak are popular technical rock climbing locations.

There is no designated trail system in the wilderness. The generally open terrain makes cross country travel easily available to more experienced hikers, and an existing network of closed vehicle trails also makes hiking routes available into most areas of the wilderness. Many visitors are using the undeveloped trailhead near Courthouse Rock (sec. 35, T. 2 N., R. 11 W.). An information board has been installed at this location. Another information board has been installed on the wilderness boundary in sec. 29, T. 2 N., R. 12 W., adjacent to the wilderness. Members of the public have expressed interest in designating a trail honoring Ben Avery, long-time Arizona outdoor writer.

Minerals

The Arizona Desert Wilderness Act withdrew the wilderness from mineral entry. There are 11 active mining claims located within the wilderness. Currently there are no mining operations, other than casual use, on active claims occurring within the wilderness.

Fire

There is no history of BLM fire suppression activities occurring in the wilderness. Sparse vegetation leaves little risk of fire spreading through the area.

Cultural Resources

The wilderness contains valuable cultural properties. Numerous sites such as lithic scatters, rock rings, and shelters exist throughout the area. In addition the wilderness has a National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) site. Specific sites are referred to by site file numbers in this document. No traditional uses by Native Americans have been identified.

Visual Resource Management

Designated wilderness is managed as a Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class I. This class provides primarily for natural ecological changes only. Areas outside of the wilderness are designated for management as VRM Class III. Class III provides that changes in the basic elements caused by a management activity may be evident in the characteristic landscape, but the changes should remain subordinate to the visual strength of the existing character. Existing range and wildlife developments within the wilderness do not meet Class I standards.

Administration

Management responsibility for the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness was transferred to Yuma District from Phoenix District in a Bureau of Land Management reorganization on December 15, 1991. These two BLM districts have management authority over use of public lands contained in the wilderness. The Yuma District has wilderness management responsibility for the entire wilderness. However, approximately 6,600 acres of the wilderness lies within the Phoenix District. This is the area depicted as the Clem allotment on Map 4. Accepted uses of grazing on these lands are managed by the Phoenix District in cooperation with the Yuma District.

Open terrain of the area lends to difficulties in enforcing the motorized vehicle prohibitions of the Wilderness Act. There were approximately 15 instances of unauthorized motor vehicle use documented in 1993. These violations have not been concentrated in any one area.

Part II - National Wilderness Management Goals

Wilderness management goals have been established to obtain consistency in the BLM wilderness management program. Goals apply to all BLM-administered wilderness areas. The underlying concepts that form the basis of these goals are wilderness preservation, minimum tool management, and management of land uses specifically provided for in the Wilderness Act:

1. To provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principle of nondegradation. The area's natural condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value present will be managed so that they will remain unimpaired.

2. To manage the wilderness area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. The wilderness resource will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of wilderness character and visitor use.

3. To manage the area using the minimum tool, equipment, or structure necessary to successfully, safely, and economically accomplish the objective. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure should be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently. Management will seek to preserve spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regulation as possible.

4. To manage nonconforming, but accepted, uses permitted by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area's wilderness character. Nonconforming uses are the exception rather than the rule; therefore, emphasis is placed on maintaining wilderness character.

Part III - Issues

Issues relating to management of the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness were identified with input from BLM resource specialists, other interested agencies, and the public. The resulting issues are separated into three main categories: Activity Plan Issues, Issues Solved Through Policy, and Issues Beyond the Scope of the Plan.

Activity Plan Issues

1. **Long-Term Protection and Enhancement of Wilderness Values.** The Wilderness Act provides for the long-term protection of wilderness values. Decisions will be made to provide solutions for the following issues.
   - Which human-caused impacts to the surface will be rehabilitated, and how will this rehabilitation be accomplished?
   - How will boundaries be managed to prevent unauthorized vehicle use?
   - What will be done to protect wilderness values from potential uses of inholdings?
   - How will cultural resources be managed?
   - How will recreation use be managed?
   - How will BLM manage water to protect wilderness values?
   - How will the BLM address public access to the wilderness?

2. **Vegetation Management:** Ongoing land uses and activities may affect the vegetation. These land uses and activities will be managed to help attain vegetative objectives. Decisions will be made to answer the following.
   - What is the desired plant community?
   - How will fire be managed to maintain natural values?
   - How will activities be managed to attain the desired plant community?

3. **Management of Range and Wildlife Operations and Developments:** Continued operation of necessary existing range and wildlife developments are specifically permitted by wilderness legislation. Operation of these developments will have affects on wilderness values and opportunities. The following questions will be addressed.
   - How will wildlife and grazing operations be managed to preserve wilderness values?
   - How will the existing developments be maintained or repaired?
   - How will the developments be modified to lessen their impacts on wilderness values?

Issues Solved Through Policy

1. **Law Enforcement and Emergency Services:** BLM policy and regulations (BLM Manual 8560.39 and 43 CFR 8560.3) provide for emergency law enforcement access in the event of fugitive pursuit or to address health and safety concerns during emergency situations. Search and rescue operations are the responsibility of the

County Sheriff. Enforcement of fish and wildlife regulations is the responsibility of the Arizona Game and Fish Department. The BLM will coordinate with the involved agencies as part of their ongoing efforts. Current policy provides sufficient guidance.

2. **Cultural Resource Inventory:** The public proposed complete inventories of the wilderness. Currently the BLM is not funded to complete such an inventory. Any needed inventories in the future would be subject to regulations contained in the BLM Manual 8560, and the Cultural Resource Management, BLM Manual 8100. Qualified individuals or groups could conduct such an inventory within guidelines established by regulations.

3. **Use of Wilderness by the Disabled:** Section 507(c) of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) reaffirms that nothing in the Wilderness Act is to be construed as prohibiting the use of wheelchairs in wilderness by an individual whose disability requires use of a wheelchair. ADA does not require agencies to provide special facilities, accommodations, or modifications to facilitate use of wilderness areas by the disabled.

4. **Minerals Management:** Any future application for a mining operation will be addressed using BLM regulations in 43 CFR 3809 and 8560. This issue is sufficiently addressed by legislation and regulations.

5. **Increased recreational vehicular access to interior portions of the wilderness:** An individual requested opening closed vehicle trails in the wilderness. The Wilderness Act prohibits this.

6. **Open the wilderness to further mineral location, and filing of claims:** Members of the public requested opening the wilderness to mineral entry. Wilderness designation withdrew public lands from mineral entry. This prohibits the location of new mining claims in wilderness.

7. **Reintroduction of Sonoran pronghorn antelope to the wilderness:** Currently there are no plans to reintroduce Sonoran pronghorn into the wilderness or the general area. If the wilderness is determined to be historic range and the USFWS finds the adjacent area is suitable, reintroduction would be compatible with wilderness management. If the best release site is in wilderness, the minimum tool for the release will be evaluated by the Area Manager at that time.

8. **Non-military overflights of the wilderness:** The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has authority to regulate the airspace. The FAA advisory is a minimum of 2000 thousand feet above ground level (AGL) over wilderness. The BLM will work with the FAA to minimize low-level overflights of the wilderness.

9. **Military overflights of the wilderness:** Military overflights are specifically permitted by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act. The Yuma District will continue to cooperate with the military to seek mutually beneficial options that maintain the integrity of wilderness airspace.

10. **Management of endangered species habitat:** Any endangered species habitat will be managed under existing policy in BLM Manual 8560.34.

11. **Construction of new wildlife or range developments:** There are no new developments proposed for the wilderness. If new projects are proposed, the plan may be amended to allow construction of necessary new developments. BLM Manual 8560 provides clear direction regarding the necessary conditions for the construction of new developments. These regulations will provide all necessary guidance.

12. **Native American Traditional Uses:** There has been no identification of current use of the area for Native American religious or traditional purposes. If such use is identified in the future, the BLM will act in accordance with Public Law 95-341 and applicable Federal policy.

13. **Cultural Resources:** Cultural Resources having scientific value are allocated to scientific use. Proposals for study will be authorized on a case by case basis guided by existing policy in BLM Manual 8560.32 and subject to compliance with section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

14. **Administrative Responsibility for Plan Actions:** Management responsibility for the Eagletail Mountains is assigned to the Yuma District. All of the management actions associated with this plan are the responsibility of the Yuma Resource Area. Certain developments have been determined to be necessary to provide for protection of wilderness values as outlined by this plan. Some of these developments are planned for outside of the wilderness, on lands administered by the Phoenix District. The Yuma Resource Area will be responsible for construction and maintenance of these developments.

Issues Beyond The Scope of the Plan

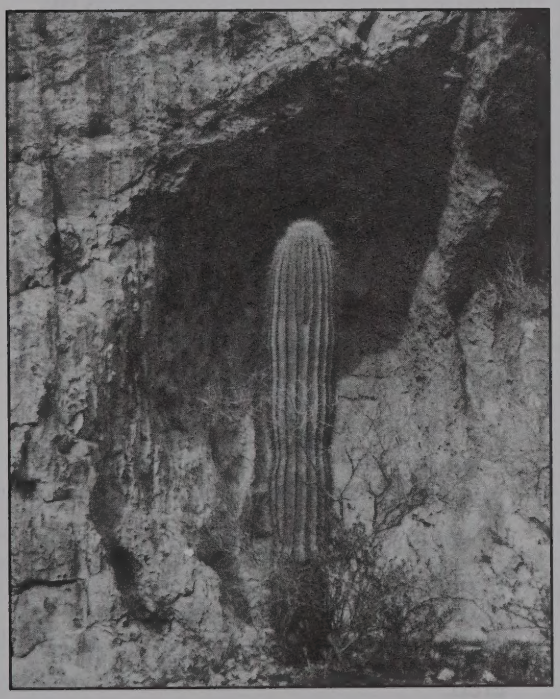
1. **Administrative Boundaries:** The boundary between the Yuma District and Phoenix District goes through a portion of the wilderness. The two districts coordinate management activities adjacent to the wilderness and will continue this in the future.

Part IV - Wilderness Management Program

Introduction

In this section, objectives are established to address activity plan issues. Management actions to meet national wilderness management goals and plan objectives are outlined. Target dates to accomplish the proposed actions are assigned. Monitoring necessary to gauge the effectiveness of the outlined management actions and to determine if plan objectives are being met, is specified.

A rationale is included immediately below several items in this section to provide additional clarification.



Saguaro in Eagletail Mountains

Objective 1

Maintain and enhance the wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and protect special features of the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness by:

- Rehabilitating the impacts of three closed vehicle trails, two mining sites, one dump site, forty bulldozer scrapes, and two abandoned developments, during the life of the plan.
- Notifying the State of Arizona of Federal Water Rights for any available water by the year 1998.
- Eliminating unauthorized motor vehicle use by the year 1995.
- Improving opportunities for recreation while preserving naturalness.
- Avoiding human impacts to cultural resources to protect their scientific, educational, and other values.
- Minimizing impacts to wilderness values from potential uses of inholdings.
- Acquiring necessary legal easements across State and private lands for administrative and public vehicular use.

Rationale: Objective 1 addresses activity plan issue 1 and National Wilderness Management Goals 1 and 2. Implement-

ing this objective will assure long-term preservation and enhancement of the area's wilderness values.

Management Actions

1. Establish the following surface disturbance mitigation guidelines.
   - Initial priority for surface reclamation work will be 1) on closed vehicle trails that do not provide access to the interior or that create a continuing source of unauthorized vehicle use; 2) on mining disturbances that could be a hazard for visitors.
   - Designated hiking trails would be narrowed, not completely rehabilitated.
   - Horse-drawn equipment may be used for rehabilitation.
   - Chemicals that simulate desert varnish may be used as a part of surface mitigation work.

2. Rehabilitate three closed vehicle trails (EMW 70, 76, 86) in secs. 20, 28, and 34, T. 2 N., R. 11 W., using nonmechanized methods by the year 2000 (Map 5). This work would consist of removing berms and loosening the soil of the vehicle trails using hand tools and horse-drawn equipment. Chemical spray may be applied to simulate desert varnish and further reduce visual impacts. Increase amount of rehabilitation if method is proven effective.

Rationale for Management Action 2: These vehicle trails were selected for rehabilitation since their removal will increase naturalness without impacting recreational opportunities.

3. Clean site and mitigate impacts at Manganese Mine (sec 12, T. 1 S., R. 12 W.) by removing trash and other surface indications of mining operations using nonmechanical methods by 1996.

4. Clean up and mitigate visual and safety impacts of mining sites located in sec. 28, T. 2 N., R. 11 W., by the year 2000. This would be accomplished using nonmechanical methods.

5. Clean up dump site located in sec. 14, T. 1 N., R. 10 W., using wheelbarrows and hand tools to remove all trash by the year 1998. Mitigate visual impacts by using chemical spray to simulate desert varnish after completion of trash removal. Trash will be disposed of in an authorized landfill.

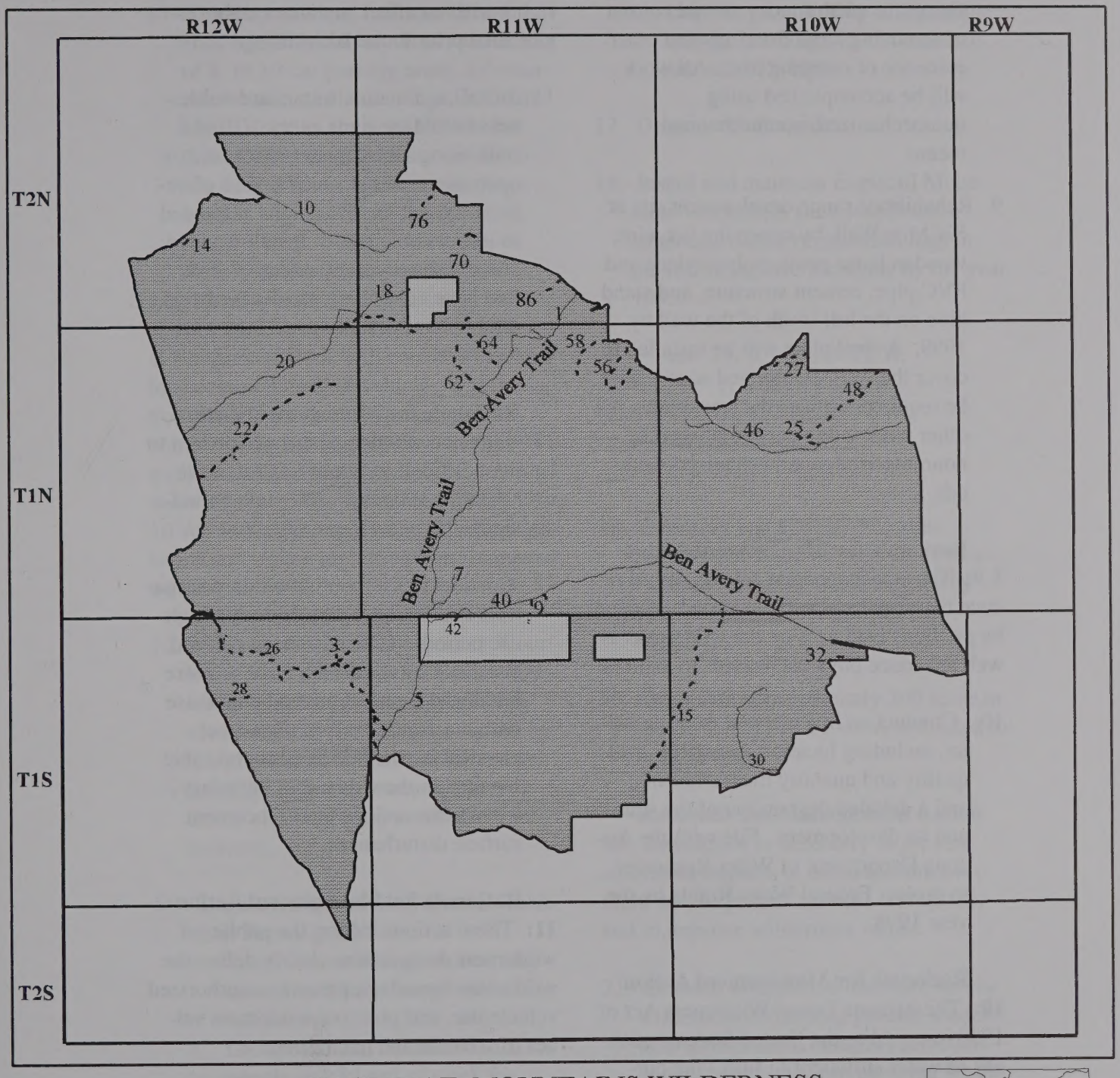
Rationale for Management Action 5: This dump site is directly adjacent to the wilderness boundary, and covers an area of approximately 100,000 square feet. The use of mechanical equipment (wheelbarrows) is the minimum tool required to remove all trash and dirt necessary to rehabilitate this site. The use of this equipment will cause no additional damage to the site.

6. Rehabilitate four bulldozer scrapes per year in the area east of Courthouse Rock for the life of the plan using nonmechanical, nonmotorized methods to backfill impacted areas.

7. Remove claim markers from abandoned or forfeited claims as discovered.

8. Rehabilitate abandoned development site in sec. 9, T. 1 N. R. 11 W. Rehabilitate campsites by the year 1995.

MAP 5 - TRAILS



EAGLETAIL MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS

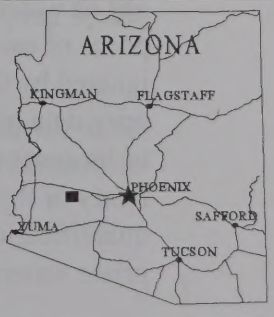
LEGEND

- Wilderness Area
- State Lands
- Wilderness Boundary
- 28 Trails to Reclaim
- 5 Trails

N

0 3 6 MILES

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
YUMA DISTRICT OFFICE
YUMA RESOURCE AREA
AUGUST 1994



LOCATION DIAGRAM

Campsite rehabilitation would consist of removing large fire rings and other evidence of camping use. All work will be accomplished using nonmechanized, nonmechanical means.

9. Rehabilitate range development site at Six Mile Well, by removing net wire, wooden fence posts, polyethylene and PVC pipe, cement structure, and stand pipe on the hill south of the well by 1999. A steel plate will be installed to cover the well. Motorized access may be required to place the steel plate. All other work will be accomplished by nonmotorized, nonmechanized methods.

Rationale for Management Action 1-9: These management actions would reduce the visual and surface impacts caused by previous land uses on the wilderness as well as reduce physical hazards to visitors.

10. Conduct an inventory of existing water, including location, beneficial uses, quality and quantity measurements, and a detailed description of the source and its development. File with the Arizona Department of Water Resources to protect Federal Water Rights by the year 1998.

Rationale for Management Action 10: The Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 reserved to the United States a quantity of water sufficient to fulfill the purposes of each of the wilderness areas designated by the bill and established the priority date of such rights as being the date of its enactment. It also requires the Secretary of the Interior to file a claim for the quantification of such rights in an appropriate watershed adjudication. These rights will not affect any water rights established prior to the BLM filing.

11. Install and maintain standard wilderness boundary signs every 1/10 of a mile along all perimeter roads, across open areas, and at specific sites of vehicle intrusions. Post signs as needed in inaccessible areas. Install wooden posts with wilderness signs in areas that have continuing incidents of sign removal and unauthorized motor vehicle use.

Rationale for Management Action 11: Signs on wooden posts have proven to be more difficult to remove and to drive over then the standard wilderness boundary signs.

12. Conduct twice monthly wilderness patrols and increase patrols during high use periods. Concentrate on cultural sites, and on areas with three or more incidents of unauthorized vehicle use within a 1-year period. Construct physical barriers using post and cable fencing on the wilderness boundary when other actions fail. Document surface disturbances.

Rationale for Management Action 11: These actions inform the public of wilderness designation, clearly define the wilderness boundary, prevent unauthorized vehicle use, and preserve wilderness values of solitude and naturalness.

13. Designate a hiking and equestrian route through the wilderness, using EMW 1, EMW 5, and EMW 40 (Map 5) as the Ben Avery Trail on National Trails Day 1996. No trail construction or maintenance will take place within the wilderness. Signs will be located outside of the wilderness.

14. Develop trailhead facilities at both ends of the Ben Avery Trail, consisting of 8- to 10-car parking areas, information boards, and visitor logs, at Courthouse Rock by the year 1997 and at the end of nonwilderness corridor in sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 10 W., by the year 1998.

Rationale for Management Action 14: Develop trail head facilities at both ends of the Ben Avery Trail. The trailhead at Courthouse Rock will consist of an area to accommodate 8-10 vehicles, information board, and visitor logs and will be completed by the year 1997. The other trailhead will be at the end of the nonwilderness corridor in sec 3, T.1 S., R. 10 W., and will consist of an information board and visitor log. It will be completed by the year 1998.

15. Manage rock climbing areas on Courthouse Rock and Eagletail Peak to preserve wilderness values, by limiting visual and physical impacts caused by use of anchors or chalk on the routes. Installation of permanent anchors to create climbing routes will not be authorized.

16. Establish the following Special Recreation Permit guidelines:
    - Special recreation permittee may not set up a base camp within the wilderness.
    - Group size will be limited to 10 people and 5 head of stock for overnight use.
    - Spike camps may be established. Stays in any one spot will be limited to 2 nights per year by all permittees.
    - Weed-free feed is required for pack stock.
    - Day use groups of up to 20 people may be permitted to visit cultural site AZ-055-1959.

17. Disperse all fire rings.

18. Install and maintain Eagletail Mountains Wilderness site identification signs and visitor registration logs in the following five locations by the year 1995.

    - sec. 35, T. 1 N., R. 11 W.
    - sec. 1, T. 2 S., R. 12 W.
    - sec. 29, T. 2 N., R. 12 W.
    - sec. 3, T. 1 S., R. 10 W.
    - sec. 21, T. 1 S., R. 10 W.

19. Inventory and allocate two sites: AZ-055-2574 and AZ-055-2777 to a Cultural Resource Use Category by 1997 according to BLM Manual 8111.21.

20. Designate approximately 300 acres in sec. 9, T. 1 N., R. 11 W. as restricted to day use only.

Rationale for Management Action 20: Restriction is necessary to prevent additional impacts to the area from overnight use, to protect cultural resources, and to improve wilderness values.

21. Develop interpretive brochure for the wilderness containing general wilderness information, cultural protection and information about camping by the year 1997.

22. Pursue all available alternatives to acquire the State surface and subsurface lands.

Rationale for Management Action 22: Acquisition of these lands is necessary for permanent protection of wilderness values. A change in the State constitution or specific legislation may be required before the BLM can implement this action.

23. In cooperation with the land owner, acquire a legal easement across State and private lands for administrative and public vehicular use on the Arlington-Clanton Well Road in T. 1 S., Rs. 10 and 11 W., on the non-County portion of Courthouse Road in Tps. 1 and 2 N., Rs. 9 and 10 W. on the EPNG Pipeline Service Road in Tps. 1 and 2 N., R. 10 W., and T. 2 N., R. 12 W., and on the unnamed access road in T. 1 S., Rs. 9 and 10 W.

Monitoring

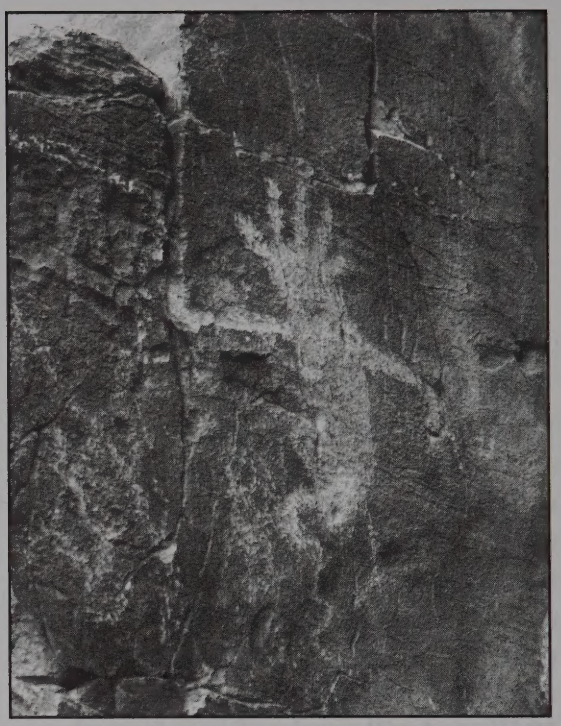
1. Inspect and evaluate the success of mitigation on each reclaimed area annually.

2. Document unauthorized vehicle use detected during patrols. Evaluate effectiveness of efforts to eliminate unauthorized vehicle use.

3. Inventory Courthouse Rock and Eagletail Peak climbing routes annually for any additional bolted routes, and develop any necessary measures to maintain natural values.

4. Use visitor logs to assess any impact of permitted day use party size on opportunities for solitude. If necessary adjust permitted party size to maintain availability of opportunity for solitude.

5. Monitor the condition of cultural site AZ-055-1959 by videotaping and photographing the site in the years 1996 and 2001.



Rock Art in Eagletail Mountains Wilderness

Objective 2

Manage vegetation to improve naturalness through the life of the plan by:

- Increasing understanding of the area's vegetation.
- Managing fire to maintain natural values.
- Managing for 15 percent utilization of bush muhley and 35 percent utilization of big galleta grass in key areas (Map 4).

Rationale: Objective 2 addresses activity plan issue 2 and National Wilderness Management Goals 1, 2, and 4. The long-term goal is to achieve Potential Natural Community (PNC) throughout the area. Since changes in seral stage requires decades, this goal cannot be reached in the life of the plan. This objective will improve understanding of the area's vegetation while moving in the direction of the long-term goal. Currently bush muhley is under represented within

the area. These utilization levels on key species will allow bush muhley to expand to its potential composition and will allow big galleta grass to maintain its composition within the plant community. This will improve naturalness and biodiversity for the area.

Management Actions

1. Establish baseline vegetation information including:

    - Pace frequency transects in representative areas by the year 1995.
    - Ecological Site Inventory by the year 1999.

2. Suppress fires that exceed or are expected to exceed a 5-chain per hour rate (1 chain = 66 feet). Fire rate-of-spread monitoring may be conducted from aircraft or on the ground using foot or horseback travel inside the wilderness. Helicopters may be used to transport crews and supplies inside the wilderness. Crews are authorized to conduct burnout operations and construct fire line using hand tools. Small fire camps may be set up within the wilderness. Surface disturbances from fire line construction will be rehabilitated before crews are released. All evidence of camp use and flagging or other debris will be removed. A Wilderness Resource Advisor will provide guidance for suppression and rehabilitation activities. Actions not listed involving motorized or mechanical equipment or vehicles in the wilderness require Yuma Resource Area approval before initiation.

Rationale for Management Action 2: There is no history of fires in the area. Plant communities within the wilderness are not fire adapted. Suppressing fires that exceed a 5-chain per hour rate of spread will protect wilderness resources.

3. Remove livestock from areas where utilization exceeds standards which are 15 percent on bush muhley or 35 percent on big galleta grass.

Monitoring

1. Read one pace frequency transect on each key area every 5 years.

Rationale: Pace frequency data have proven to be accurate indicators of vegetation change. This data aids in determining the direction of vegetative changes particularly with regard to increase or decrease of perennial species.

2. Photo trend plots and species composition studies will be established at key areas. They will be read in conjunction with pace frequency studies.

3. In the event of a fire, pace frequency transects will be established to measure the rate of vegetative recovery.

Rationale: This will allow the BLM to monitor the successional development of these communities following disturbance.

4. At a minimum, utilization data will be collected in April or within two (2) weeks following livestock removal, whichever is later.

5. Complete Range Allotment Evaluation on Eagletail Allotment by the year 1999.

6. Continue to cooperate in monitoring desert tortoise population and health by using information obtained from AGFD tortoise study.

Objective 3

Maintain existing essential livestock and wildlife developments while minimizing impacts to wilderness values.

Rationale: Objective 3 addresses activity plan issue 3, National Wilderness Management Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4 and the legal requirements of wilderness legislation.

Management Actions

1. Authorize the following mechanized access or use of mechanized tools for maintenance of the following range developments (Map 4 and Table 2). Routine inspections, and minor maintenance of these developments will be accomplished with nonmechanical methods. Necessary motorized access to the western portion of Lone Mountain fence will be cross-country directly along the fenceline. Necessary motorized access to the eastern portion will be along EMW 1 (map 4). No mechanized maintenance of these routes will be authorized.

2. Authorize motorized access to Anvil Well in October and April for the length of this plan. Vehicle trips authorized during these months will be as follows:

   - Initial round-trip vehicle visit for hauling the portable generator, required to power the pump, necessary fuel reserves for pump operation to fill storage tanks, hay or other feed stuffs for riding stock or livestock, and tools and supplies needed to repair the facilities.
   - Second-round trip to retrieve the generator, fuel containers and for site cleanup. Any access necessary for refueling the generator while filling the tanks will be by foot or horseback.
   - An additional visit during this cycle may be authorized by the Area Manager if there is a demonstrated need. Authorization is required before the additional trip is made.
   - Additional access may be authorized if water storage is depleted due to use by livestock. This additional authorization will be a temporary one-time authorization. Authorization is required before additional trip is made.
   - Major maintenance is anticipated to occur once every 5 years. This

Table 2 Authorized Range Development Motorized Access and Frequency

Range Development	Frequency/Route	Type
Lone Mountain Fence Western Portion	3 days every 5 years Route: Along Fence	vehicle
Lone Mountain Fence Eastern Portion	3 days every 5 years Route : EMW 1	vehicle
Eagletail Outreach Pipeline	2 days every 5 years	mechanized tools

may require access by heavier well service trucks.

Rationale for Management Actions 1 and 2: The use of mechanized or motorized equipment is necessary for operation and maintenance for Lone Mountain Fence, Eagletail Outreach Pipeline, and Anvil Well.

3. The permittee will contact the Area Manager 2 weeks prior to using motorized or mechanical equipment in the wilderness. All such use will be documented and reported to the Yuma Area Manager within 2 weeks of occurrence.

4. Inspection and maintenance of developments other than Lone Mountain Fence, Eagletail Outreach Pipeline, and O'brien Anvil Well will be accomplished by nonmotorized, nonmechanical means or from outside of the wilderness boundary.

5. Reconstruct Johns Well Fence by installing new posts and wire using nonmotorized, nonmechanical methods by the year 1996.

6. Accomplish all routine inspections of wildlife developments by nonmotorized, nonmechanical means. BLM personnel may assist with inspections.

7. In accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with AGFD provide for the following flight operations. If possible, AGFD will provide 2-week advance notification of planned flights.

   - One low-level bighorn sheep survey, 1 day per year, during the period of October 1 through November 30.
   - One low-level javelina and mule deer survey, 1 day per year, during the period from January 1 through March 31.
   - Additional flights for monitoring water levels or in response to emergency situations may occur after notification of the Area Manager.
   - It may be necessary to land a helicopter to retrieve a radio collar from a sick or dead animal, allow-

Table 3 Authorized Wildlife Development Access Method, Route, and Equipment

Development	Access Method/ Route	Equipment
AGFD No. 605	Air/EMW # 30	Trucks, tools
AGFD No. 712	Air/EMW # 5	Trucks, tools
AGFD No. 726	Air/EMW # 1	Trucks, tools
Anvil Tank (AGFD No. 834)	Air/Emw # 40, then unmapped way to site	Trucks, tools
Dead Deer Tank	Air/EMW # 20	Trucks, tools
Gray Tank	Air only	Tools
Triple Eye Tank (AGFD No. 827)	Air/EMW # 10	Trucks, tools

ing quick recovery of telemetry equipment.

- If bighorn sheep capture work becomes necessary, the Area Manager may approve aircraft operations to capture sheep.

Rationale for Management Action 7: The use of the aircraft is necessary for conducting wildlife surveys and the specified management activities.

8. Authorize the following access and equipment for emergency repairs, major maintenance or water supplementation. Nonmotorized, nonmechanical transport of supplies or equipment is the preferred method. If this is not feasible, then either air or mechanized ground transport may be used. Access method will be determined by the Area Manager on a case by case basis after consultation with AGFD. Trucks would be the least preferred alternative (Map 3 and Table 3). Area Manager will be notified before the use of motorized or mechanical equipment.

Rationale for Management Action 8: The use of mechanized access and tools may be necessary for emergency repairs, major maintenance, or water supplementation. The authorized routes are along existing closed vehicle trails. No new routes will be constructed, and no mechanical maintenance of existing routes is authorized.

9. Modify the following wildlife developments by 1999 using nonmotorized, nonmechanical methods:

    - AGFD No. 605- Paint metal surfaces to reduce visual contrast. Install visual or electronic device to monitor water levels.
    - AGFD No. 712- Paint metal surfaces to reduce visual contrast. Install visual or electronic device to monitor water levels.
    - Anvil Tank (AGFD No. 834)- Paint and seal dams. Paint metal surfaces to reduce visual contrast. Install visual or electronic device to monitor water levels.
    - Gray Tank- Paint and seal dams. Paint metal surfaces to reduce visual contrast. Install visual or electronic device to monitor water levels.

10. Redevelop Triple Eye Tank (AGFD No. 827) by the year 1996. Completion of this project may require the use of helicopters, mechanical equipment, mechanical tools, and ground transport. Redevelopment of this project may require 1 week.

11. Redevelop AGFD No. 712 by the year 1998. Replace apron structure, install buried fiberglass storage tanks and walk-in drinker. This may require motorized access to haul the necessary tools and supplies, and motorized equipment to bury the storage tank. Air transport of materials is preferable; however, if necessary the authorized route will be EMW 5. This project may require 7 days to accomplish.

Rationale for Management Actions 10 and 11: This will have the long-term effect of substantially decreasing the management activities necessary to maintain the developments.

12. Install walk-in drinkers on AGFD 605 and AGFD 726 by the year 2003. This may require motorized access to haul in the drinker. Installation will take place with hand tools.

Part V - Plan Evaluation

The Yuma Resource Area will conduct annual evaluations of the plan to:

1. Document completed management actions and adjust schedules for the following year as necessary.

2. Determine if plan objectives are being met.

3. Determine the need for new management actions.

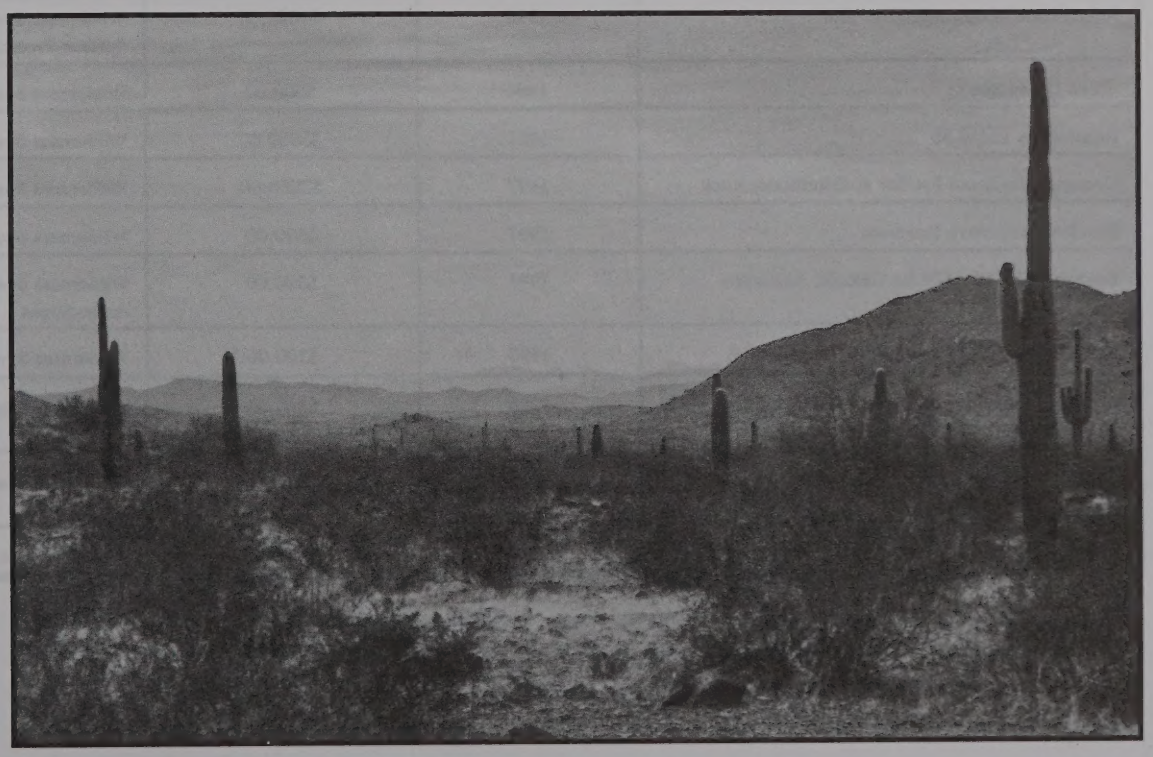
4. Determine if the plan needs to be revised.

5. Amend the plan with necessary revisions. Revisions will be available for public review before implementation.

Part VI - Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimates

Table 4 - Annual Tasks

Management Actions Plan Evaluation	Workmonths ($3400/MO)	Task Assignment
Ongoing Activities		
A. Wilderness Patrols	4	Law Enforcement, Park Rangers
B. Installing and Maintaining Signs	.5	Park Ranger
C. Building Barricades	1	Wilderness Specialist Park Ranger
D. Resource Protection	3	All Specialists
E. Public Response	.25	Wilderness Spec. and Park Ranger
Monitoring		
A. Inventory and Data Collection	2	Park Ranger Wilderness Specialist Range Conservationist Wildlife Biologist
Plan Evaluation		
A. Data Synthesis B. Data Evaluation C. Plan Amendments	1	Interdisciplinary Team



View in the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness

Table 5 - Management Actions

Management Actions	Target Date	Estimated Costs	Task Assignment
Rehabilitate EMW 70	1995	$5000.00	Wilderness Specialist Park Ranger
Visual Mitigation Work at AGFD 605	1995	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist Wildlife Biologist
Initiate Vegetation Monitoring Surveys	1995	$500.00	Range Conservationist Wilderness Specialist
Evaluate Site at AZ-055-2777 for Cultural Allocation	1995	$3000.00	Wilderness Specialist Archaeologist
Install Site Identification Signs	1995	$350.00	Wilderness Specialist Park Ranger
Rehabilitate Camping Sites At AZ-055-1959	1995	$100.00	Wilderness Specialist Park Ranger
Restrict 300 acres in sec. 9, T. 1 N. R. 11 W. to day use only.	1995	$200.00	Wilderness Specialist
Current Condition Survey of AZ-055-1959 Site	1996	$6000.00	Wilderness Specialist Archaeologist
Designate Ben Avery Trail	1996	$300.00	Wilderness Specialist
Visual Mitigation of AGFD 712	1996	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist
Redevelopment of Triple Eye Tank	1996	$10000.00	Wilderness Specialist Wildlife Biologist
Repair Johns Well Fence	1996	$600.00	Wilderness Specialist Range Conservationist
Rehabilitate Manganese Mine Site	1996	$1000.00	Wilderness Specialist Surface Protection
Clean Dump Site	1996	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist
Rehabilitate EMW 86	1997	$5000.00	Wilderness Specialist
Construct Trailhead Facility at Courthouse Rock	1997	$2000.00	Wilderness Specialist
Provide Interpretive Brochure	1997	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist
Evaluate AZ-055-2574 for Cultural Allocation	1997	$300.00	Wilderness Specialist Archeologist
Visual Mitigation at Anvil Tank (AGFD 834)	1997	$200.00	Wilderness Specialist
Conduct Inventory of Surface Water, Notify Arizona of Federal Water Rights	1998	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist
Construct Trailhead Facility at End of Nonwilderness Corridor	1998	$2000.00	Wilderness Specialist
Visual Mitigation of Dump Site	1998	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist

(continued)

Table 5 - Management Actions (continued)

Management Actions	Target Date	Estimated Costs	Task Assignment
Complete Redevelopment of AGFD 712	1998	$10000.00	BLM AGFD
Complete Ecological Site Inventory	1999	$5000.00	Wilderness Specialist Range Conservationist
Rehabilitate EMW 76	1999	$100.00	Wilderness Specialist Range Conservationist
Allotment Evaluation on Eagletail Allotment	1999	$100.00	Wilderness Specialist Range Conservationist
Visual Mitigation of Grays Tank	1999	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist Wildlife Biologist
Rehabilitate Abandoned Development at AZ-055-1959	1999	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist
Rehabilitate Abandoned Development at 6-Mile Well	1999	$500.00	Wilderness Specialist
Rehabilitate Mining Site sec. 28, T. 2 N., R. 11 W. (End of EMW 86)	2000	$1000.00	Wilderness Specialist Surface Protection
Repeat Current Condition Survey of AZ-055-1959	2001	$6000.00	Wilderness Specialist Archeologist
Install Walk-in Drinker on AGFD 605	2002	$2000.00	BLM AGFD
Install Walk-in Drinker on AGFD 726	2003	$2000.00	BLM AGFD
Acquire Necessary Easements	2004	$44000.00	Right-of-Way Acquisition Specialist

Part VII - Appendices

Appendix A
Public Involvement

Public input has been an important feature of the planning process. The Bureau of Land Management held three public meetings. These meetings were announced by letter to over 400 interested agencies, groups, Indian Tribes, and private citizens. Written comments were solicited from those who would be unable to attend the public meetings. One of these meetings was held in Yuma, and two were held in Phoenix. Some people participated further in the planning process by sharing their knowledge of the area, evaluating the work of the interdisciplinary team, and expressing their concerns regarding current management and their vision for the future of the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness. They assembled to review the planning document during its preparation and to comment on its direction and content. The time and effort contributed by the public is greatly appreciated. The efforts of the following people are especially appreciated.

Ms. Bobbie Holaday
Mr. Lynne Holt
Mr. Doug Newton
Mr. Bill O'Brien
Mr. Joe Machac

The Draft Eagletail Mountains Management Plan and Environmental Assessment was distributed by mail on September 19, 1994. During a 45-day public comment period following the distribution of the Draft Plan, the BLM received a total of 11 written comments.

Comments were received from 6 individuals, including the permittee on the Eagletail Allotment, The Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society, two State Agencies; the Arizona State Land Department, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and two Federal Agencies; the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the United States Geological Survey.

In general, the comments were supportive of the document as written. The BLM has provided specific detailed responses to each comment by letter to the individual or group that submitted comments. These comments and the BLM responses, as well as a detailed list of specific changes made to the draft document, are available upon request from the Yuma Resource Area.

As a result of public response to the Draft document, the BLM has made a number of changes to the final document. In general, these changes are minor editorial changes and clarifications of responsibilities that do not affect the management direction of the wilderness.

The BLM did make three changes in response to these comments that will affect management activities. These changes are in the wilderness management portion of the document. Specific changes include dropping a proposed road maintenance action, revision of the management action involving mitigation of mining sites by sealing mine shafts, the management plan no longer calls for sealing shafts. Also the BLM has added an action that deals with rock climbing, specifically, the BLM will not authorize the installation of new permanent anchors in the wilderness.

Appendix B
Plan Participants

Bureau of Land Management

Yuma Resource Area

Kent Biddulph	Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist
Dave Daniels	Surface Protection Specialist
Joy Gilbert	Area Manager
Pete Gonzales	Realty Specialist
Susanna Henry	Wildlife Biologist
Candice Holzer	Land Law Examiner
Ken Howell	Wilderness Specialist
Boma Johnson	Archaeologist
Mark Lowans	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Ron Morfin	Wilderness Specialist
Roger Oyler	Range Conservationist
Dave Smith	Wildlife Biologist
James Stewart	Park Ranger
Todd Suess	Outdoor Recreation Planner

Yuma District

Don Applegate	Resource Advisor
Cory Bodman	Natural Resource Specialist
Barbara Bowles	Geographic Information Specialist
Dave Curtis	Environmental Coordinator
Lynn Levitt	Fire Management Officer
Loren DeRosear	Fire Control Officer

Arizona State Office

Jeff Jarvis	National Wilderness Program Leader
Ken Mahoney	Senior Technical Specialist- Wilderness

Arizona Game and Fish Department

Ron Christofferson	Project Evaluation Coordinator
John Hervert	Wildlife Program Manager
John Kennedy	Habitat Program Manager
Lowell Whitaker	Wildlife Manager

Appendix C
Bibliography

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Environmental Assessment

Introduction

Background

The Eagletail Mountains Wilderness was designated by Congress in November 1990. A management plan was developed to provide management guidance for the area in conformance with the Lower Gila South Resource Management Plan approved June 1988 and the Lower Gila South Wilderness Impact Statement. This Environmental Assessment analyzes the potential impacts of proposed actions and management alternatives that were considered for the plan.

Background information which includes location, access, and general management situation descriptions is provided on pages 1 to 11 of the proposed Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

A series of actions were proposed to accomplish objectives that address BLM national wilderness goals and issues identified during development of the wilderness management plan. Proposed actions comply with the mandates of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Wilderness Act of 1964, and the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, and are guided by wilderness management policy as outlined in BLM Manual 8560.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action

The proposed action is the adoption and implementation of the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan. In general, the proposed action would provide for the protection and enhancement of wilderness values within a 10 year timeframe. Management actions to restore disturbances caused by previous land uses including closed vehicle trails and prior mining activities are addressed. The proposal includes measures to protect existing natural resources and values. It also provides for the operation, maintenance and repair of existing wildlife and range developments located within the wilderness. Under the proposed action opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation would be maintained. Scenic qualities and values of naturalness would be enhanced. Proposed management actions that could have environmental effects are listed below.

1. Wilderness patrols, signing, law enforcement activities and as a final effort, the construction of vehicle barriers would be used to deter unauthorized vehicle use. Wooden post and steel cable would be the preferred material for constructing barriers.

2. Trailhead facilities, including parking areas, informational displays and visitor logs would be constructed and maintained.

3. Mining sites would be rehabilitated using explosives and hand tools.

4. Trash dump site would be cleaned and visual impacts mitigated using wheelbarrows and hand tools. Trash would be disposed of in an authorized landfill.

5. Four bulldozer scrapes per year would be rehabilitated, using hand tools.

6. Camping sites in AZ-055-1959 would be rehabilitated.

7. Cadastral survey of wilderness boundary would take place.

8. Installation of new, permanent anchors for rock climbing would not be allowed.

9. Special Recreation Permit guidelines would be established.

10. Site Identification signs, and visitor registration logs would be installed and maintained at five locations.

11. The Ben Avery trail would be designated.

12. Two sites, AZ-055-2574 and AZ-055-2577 would be evaluated for cultural allocation.

13. There would be 300 acres in sec. 9, T. 1 R. 11 W. restricted to day use only.

14. The BLM would acquire the State lands located in the wilderness.

15. The desired plant community would be defined as PNC for the entire wilderness.

16. Vegetative monitoring program would be established.

17. Allotment Evaluation of Eagletail Allotment would occur.

18. All routine inspections of wildlife and range developments would be accomplished with nonmechanical methods or by air.

19. Use of mechanized, motorized methods would be authorized, where necessary as minimum tool for the operation and maintenance of range and wildlife developments. Minor modifications to existing wildlife facilities, in order to minimize access necessary for monitoring, maintenance and water supplementation requirements would be added. Emergency access for repairs would be authorized.

20. Low-level overflights necessary for wildlife operations would be allowed for.

21. Major redevelopment of Triple Eye Tank and AGFD 712, using mechanical tools and access would be authorized.

22. Johns Well Fence would be upgraded to meet BLM fencing standards.

23. Two abandoned developments would be mitigated.

No Action Alternative

Under the no action alternative, management guidance would be provided by the Wilderness Act of 1964, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, and the National BLM Wilderness Management Policy. No specific actions would be proposed for the rehabilitation of existing disturbances or the enhancement of wilderness values. Wildlife operations would be managed according to an existing WOMP. Operation of range developments would be managed on a case-by-case basis.

Affected Environment

A description of the affected environment can be found on pages 1 through 10 of the proposed Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan.

Environmental Consequences

The following critical elements have been analyzed and would not be adversely affected by either the proposed action or the no action alternative:

1. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
2. Prime or Unique Farmlands
3. Floodplains
4. Native American Religious Concerns
5. Threatened or Endangered Species
6. Solid or Hazardous Wastes
7. Water Quality
8. Wetlands or Riparian Zones
9. Wild and Scenic Rivers

Impacts of the Proposed Action

Air Quality: Proposed projects that cause surface disturbance would have minor impacts on air quality. Generally impacts will be limited to the duration of the project. Authorized vehicle access will also have temporary affects on air quality. There would be no long-term adverse impacts to air quality by the proposed action.

Cultural Resources: Existing cultural resources would be monitored and protected, additional resources would be evaluated and allocated to a cultural use category. Allocation of cultural sites would provide additional protection to these resources. Cultural resources would not be adversely impacted.

Range: The proposed action would define minimum tool requirements, and authorize certain motorized access necessary to operate and maintain specific range developments located within the wilderness. Johns Well fence would be improved to meet BLM standards. An allotment evaluation on the Eagletail allotment would be conducted and an adjustment in authorized AUM's could occur. In general, livestock operations within the wilderness would be minimally impacted by implementing the proposed action.

Recreation: Development of trailhead facilities, increased signage, and the dedication of the Ben Avery trail may increase and focus recreational use of the wilderness. Informational displays and promotion of wilderness ethics such as "Leave No Trace" will minimize increased visitor use impacts. Visitor use would be monitored, and management adjustments could take place.

Soils: The vehicle trail mitigation, mining site mitigation, and redevelopment of wildlife developments in the proposed action would have short-term impacts on local area soils. The removal of berms, and loosening of soils could cause increased wind and water erosion until the area is revegetated. Authorized vehicle access will have minor impacts on the soils of the authorized routes. Impacts will be limited to areas directly affected by the proposed actions.

Vegetation: Managing vegetation for PNC would provide for natural vegetative communities within the wilderness. Vegetation studies would allow additional management actions to be considered. The proposed mitigation projects, and redevelopment projects may have minor localized impacts on vegetation. These impacts would be local, and short-term. Authorized vehicle access would also have impacts on local vegetation.

Visual Resource Management: Visual impacts from the construction of information displays and trailhead facilities, outside of the wilderness area would occur. Visual impacts of these developments would not exceed those allowed in a Class III VRM, and would be mitigated by using materials with a minimal background contrast. Modifications and redevelopment of wildlife developments within the wilderness will reduce visual impacts with a goal of meeting Class I VRM standards. Vehicle trail mitigation, and other surface mitigation projects would also improve visual resources to meet Class I VRM standards, over the length of the plan.

Wilderness Values: Wilderness values would be maintained and enhanced within 10 years under the provisions of the proposed action. Barriers, informational displays and trailhead facilities constructed outside the wilderness boundary would prevent motorized violations. Using the informational displays to promote "Leave No Trace" land use ethics would assist in preventing new visitor use impacts to natural values and protect cultural resources.

Proposed mitigation projects would enhance the wilderness by removing evidence of human activities, as well as limiting the need for additional mechanized access to these developments. Limiting the amount and type of access allowed will alleviate disruptions caused by operation of wildlife and range developments.

Wilderness values of solitude and naturalness would suffer short-term impacts on a recurrent basis from the operation of wildlife and range developments. Activities occurring during redevelopment of wildlife developments, proposed rehabilitation projects, wildlife management overflights, and from wilderness patrols and monitoring activities would also have impacts of limited duration on wilderness values of solitude and naturalness. Designation of the Ben Avery trail, and development of trailhead facilities also may attract more visitors to the area which would impact on opportunities for solitude and naturalness. Restrictions on camping and contacts with management personnel during wilderness patrols would have impacts on opportunities for unregulated recreation. These impacts would be confined to areas directly adjacent to the proposed operations while they are occurring.

Short-term impacts caused by redevelopment of wildlife facilities would be moderated by the decrease in the need for access for maintenance, and operation of the developments in the future. Short-term impacts caused by proposed mitigation projects would be moderated by long-term improvement and enhancement of existing wilderness values.

Wildlife: The proposed operation and maintenance of wildlife developments would support viable populations of wildlife. Continued use of low-level overflights would allow for the collection of necessary population and health data. Redevelopments of existing projects would provide a more reliable source of water for wildlife populations.

Impacts of the No Action Alternative

Air Quality: There would be no impacts to air quality from proposed mitigation and redevelopment projects. Authorized vehicle use would occur, and some local impacts would occur during periods of vehicle access.

Cultural Resources: Known cultural resources would be protected, no new allocations of cultural resources would be made. No additional protection of cultural resources would occur.

Range: Access would continue to be authorized on a case by case basis. There would be no allotment evaluation conducted, and no adjustment in AUM's would take place. Johns Well fence would not be rebuilt.

Recreation: Development of trailhead facilities, increased signage, construction of information boards and publication of brochures would not occur. The dedication of the Ben Avery trail would not take place. Recreation use would increase and without the mitigation of informational displays and promotion of wilderness ethics such as "Leave No Trace" recreational impacts on the wilderness would also increase. No monitoring of visitor use would occur.

Soils: Vehicle trail mitigation, mining site mitigation, and redevelopment of wildlife developments would not take place. Authorized vehicle access would continue to have impacts on the soils along the authorized routes. Unauthorized vehicle use will continue to have local impacts.

Vegetation: No vegetation monitoring would occur. No impacts to vegetation from mitigation or redevelopment projects would occur. Authorized access to range and wildlife developments would impact local vegetation. Unauthorized vehicle use would continue to impact vegetation.

Visual Resource Management: Current conditions would be maintained under this alternative. Developments that do not meet Class I standards would not be improved. There would be no improvement in visual impacts from proposed mitigation efforts.

Wilderness Values: With this alternative, existing laws, regulations, and policies would be followed without an integrated management strategy. Proposed mitigation and rehabilitation projects would not occur. Rehabilitation would occur naturally. No visual mitigation of wildlife developments would occur, there would be no decrease in the amount of management activities necessary for maintenance and operation of wildlife developments.

Wilderness values of solitude and naturalness would suffer short-term impacts on a recurrent basis from wildlife management overflights and the operation of wildlife and range developments. There would be no short-term impacts from redevelopment of wildlife developments, and no long-term decrease in the management activities necessary to maintain and operate these developments.

Wildlife: Wildlife operations would continue in conformance with an existing WOMP. Low-level overflights would con-

tinue without input from the BLM. No project redevelopments would take place, no visual mitigation work would occur.

Cumulative Impacts

The geographic extent considered in this analysis encompasses the wilderness with a planning horizon of 10 years and is focused on wilderness values.

In general the proposed action provides for the protection of wilderness values from potential cumulative impacts that would be likely if there were unrestricted and unmonitored visitor use. It also would improve wilderness values by limiting the use of motorized access and mechanical tools required to operate and maintain existing developments in the wilderness. Implementing the proposed action would reduce the potential for cumulative impacts to wilderness values from repeated motorized vehicle use, both authorized and unauthorized.

The proposed action may increase visitor use over the long term. Education and emphasis on recreational ethics such as "Leave No Trace" and "Tread Lightly" will minimize these impacts.

Mitigation

Mitigation for the proposed action and the no action alternative is guided by National BLM Wilderness Management Policy and is, therefore the same. Mitigation measures specific to the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness are as follows.

1. Administrative actions would be scheduled for periods when there is the least potential for impacts to wilderness visitors, such as during weekdays when visitor use is likely to be the lowest.

2. Only the minimum tool or action necessary to reasonably accomplish management objectives would be authorized for use.

3. Land use ethics, such as "Leave No Trace" and "Tread Lightly" would be encouraged so that visitor use in the long term would occur with the minimum possible impact on wilderness values.

Consultation and Coordination

Information about consultation, coordination, and public involvement can be found in Appendix A and Appendix B of the proposed Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan.

Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record

Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan

Environmental Assessment Number AZ-055-94-80
Case File AZA-25497

Decision: It is my decision to approve the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan. The plan establishes management direction for the Eagletail Mountains Wilderness for a 10-year period.

Finding of No Significant Impact: Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant, therefore an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

Rationale for decision: The plan provides for the continued maintenance of wilderness values, for rehabilitation of existing disturbances, and improvement of recreational opportunities. The plan provides for access to existing range and wildlife developments, natural vegetation succession and habitat improvement. Routine monitoring and yearly evaluations provide for modifications to the plan if a change in conditions requires them.

During a 45 day public review period, 11 comments were received for the draft Eagletail Mountains Wilderness Management Plan. These letters resulted in some minor modifications to the proposed actions, as well as editorial changes to the text of the document and environmental assessment in order to clarify several points. The changes are detailed in Appendix A.

Other Alternative Considered: The Proposed action and the No Action Alternative were considered.

Mitigation/Stipulations: All mitigation measures are incorporated within the proposed action.

Recommended by: _____ 2/17/95
Area Manager, Yuma Resource Area — Date

Recommended by: Judith D. Reed 2/17/95
District Manager, Yuma District — Date

Approved by: Lester K. Rosenkrance 2/22/95
State Director, Arizona — Date

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1995 - 673-349 / 29002 REGION NO. 8

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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